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MARY J. TABER



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# A HONEYMOON SOLILOQUY

By

*Jane Holland*  
MARY J. TABER

Author of "The Cathedrals of England," "Bells: An Anthology," "Just A Few Friends," "Bathsheba's Letters," etc.

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## A HONEYMOON SOLILOQUY

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**I**F Jack were not so adorably angelic I should think there was witchcraft or something else uncanny about this marriage of ours, for there has been a constant succession of untoward events since the evening he made me the offer of his heart and hand and I asked for time to consider.

Why or for what reason I made this request it would puzzle a Philadelphia lawyer to decide. No human being knows the why or wherefore, I, least of any. For months I had been thinking of him day and night and hoping he would tell me he loved me and wanted me to be his wife, yet when he actually spoke the words I longed to hear I suddenly felt surprised, unprepared, frightened.

Jack laughed, took out his watch and allowed me two minutes and a half for reflection. The rogue! I suspect he knew perfectly well that I had loved him for many a long year, ever since he wore kilts and sashes, or at any rate knickerbockers.

Before the time limit expired my head sank on his shoulder in the spot made to cradle a woman's head. I hid my face and began to sob, though, as I said before, no mortal knows why or wherefore, except that in every stress of emotion woman's tears are always in order. Lachrymose she is and probably always will be. She weeps when she is sad, when she is mad, when she is glad. The emancipation of her sex has not freed her from the tyranny of those exasperating tear glands. Man stands dry-eyed and superior while she is obsessed by overflowing ducts.

As my change of base was somewhat sudden and

unexpected, I jostled Jack's watch out of his hand. Availing itself of Newton's Law of Gravitation, it fell clattering to the floor, carrying with it the ribbon and gold racing medal attached, which he calls his brass trunk check. Naturally the crystal was broken and the internal economy seriously damaged or, as Jack expresses it, "put out of commission."

Now that I had something tangible to cry about, I ceased wailing, sat up, took my handkerchief out of my sleeve, wiped my eyes and apologized for the mischief I had caused.

Jack said, "It is not of the slightest consequence. Let it stop; let it stop forever if it wants to. Don't worry, Little One!"

Why Little One, when I am two inches the taller and several pounds the heavier? A buxom lass is dad's pronouncement, being well developed by athletic sports, a particularly healthy young woman and in my style and carriage essentially modern of the moderns.

The caressing tone in which that "Little One" was spoken and the long kiss which followed banished my doubts forever. All was well with the world. Time for us stopped at the moment the watch stopped, which was really the proper thing for it to do. In fact we did not know there *was* any time until Popper called over the banisters, "Olivia, do you know what time it is?"

That is his stereotyped interrogation whenever the college boys stay late. I fancied his accents were less stern than aforetime. Perhaps they were mollified by Jack's quarter of a million of dollars in possession and very much more in anticipation.

I had not the remotest idea of the time of night,

or day as it might well be, but I made haste to reply, "It is half-past eight by Mr. St. Albans' watch."

Popper rejoined, "I imagine Mr. St. Albans' watch is a 'stop-watch.' It is time little girls were abed and asleep an hour and a half ago."

Then we must bid each other our first good-bye. It was an affecting ceremony, almost as if it were a parting of seven years with no certainty of ever meeting again. Jack quoted his beloved Shakespeare:

"Good-night, good-night; parting is such sweet sorrow  
That I shall say good-night till it be tomorrow."

"And by Jove, I have done it, for I hear the clock on the stairs striking twelve this very minute."

I exclaimed, "Goodness! Popper must have been asleep! He was never so dilatory before in testing my chronological knowledge."

The next day, or more correctly later in the same day, Jack interviewed Popper at the office and asked permission, all in due form, to marry the daughter of the house, as the eldest daughter is called in England. I have been credibly informed that Popper answered blandly, "I do not know that I have any objections."

Objections! I should say *not*. He was most tickled to death, and congratulated me on landing my big fish at last, which struck me as a pretty shabby speech for a parent to make, who had done all the angling himself, he and Mommer.

She tried to shed a few perfunctory tears at parting with her first-born, her eldest hope, but having no Jack to lend her his shoulder to shed them on, she soon wiped her dry eyes and turned them on the practical side of the affair, for Mommer is nothing

if not practical. She began planning my wedding without more ado, her first observation being, "You must and shall be married on your birthday."

Jack's future father-in-law proved to be correct in saying the watch was a stop-watch. The hands still point to 8.30 and the owner protests, "I am satisfied with it as it is. I do not want it repaired because it is the time I reckon from. All previous is not B. C. or A. D. for me, just B. O., which means 'Before Olivia.' I have another watch good enough to tell sidereal time by. This watch does not measure time by the stars, but by heaven itself."

Brother Tom said, "Jack has got it bad; however, we may hope for a safe recovery after the fever has run its course and the crisis is passed."

I spoke from an elevated plane, as a fiancée of acknowledged standing: "Tom, you ought not to talk so foolishly. It is not good form. Remember, you are no longer a schoolboy pure and simple. You are——"

"Neither the one nor the other," shouted this A-1 olive branch, rolling off the sofa on the floor in a paroxysm of laughter.

I realized that on this occasion I had not been the guide, philosopher and friend I always aim to be to the younger children.

Mommer soon began my trousseau in good earnest by sending an alphabet of Old English letters three inches high with two dozen linen sheets to be embroidered with C. When they were sent home we found the girl had not accurately distinguished between C and E, but had worked the letter E on the whole clamjamfry. I was distressed, but Mommer said, "I think you are wrong to say the sheets are ruined

and you will sell them to Mrs. Ellmore at half price, for C and E are almost identical. If the little querk or querl, or whatever you may call it, is noticed at all it will be considered a flourish in the embroidery. The Old English letters are so queer you have to be introduced to them anyway; besides, every one will know it stands for Carisbrook and will take the C for granted."

Popper tried his hand at consolation: "It is very simple: call them 'seconds' as we do at the cotton mills, and deduct the loss from the operatives' pay."

I cried out hotly, "I'd scorn to defraud the poor girl of her hard-earned money."

Not one whit disconcerted, Popper, who was in a teasing mood (he always teases when he is pleased), went on to say, "Maybe your second venture's name will begin with E, after you have divorced Jack, as of course you will, for I never knew you to be out of the fashion."

I exclaimed, "Divorce! Nonsense! How can you talk so? I think it is perfectly awful the way people are getting divorced. Statistics average one couple in every seven. I can assure you our marriage will not be 'a suspended indeterminate sentence dependent on good behavior.'"

I read somewhere something like this: "Oh Love! Whither away? And through the chill wintry air there sounded the sad refrain, Wither away!" No, no! There will be no withering away about our love. It is sacrosanct.

What was the third mishap? Oh, that out-of-date behind-the-times dressmaker made up my most swagger gown with two whole widths of Lyons velvet in the skirt. Of course, it had to be all made over and cut

down to the regulation spread of twelve inches, which is ample, for, as Jack asserts, no one could wish a lady to advance more than *one foot* at a time.

There was a lot of the velvet wasted, but I gave the pieces to the Girls' Industrial School to make bags for the Christmas sale. As *No Woman* can have a pocket, *Every Woman* must have a bag. This is not an aphoristic excerpt from the play of "*Everywoman*," though it sounds like it. Just to think of it, no pocket at all, while a man has at least sixteen, counting those in his overcoat. What a relief it must be to search through them all to find any old thing—a nickel, a string, a match, a pipe, a cigar, a glove, a handkerchief, a pistol, a knife, a door-key, a postage stamp, a love letter, a visiting card, a business card, a car ticket. Bless my heart, what a privilege! Small wonder that men are Superior Beings when they are born to such great advantages; and if they are self-made men they always carry a book in their pocket. Let us speak well of pockets till we die.

"Lyddy Locket lost her pocket.  
Lyddy Fisher found it."

The next grand fiasco was great-aunt Minerva's wedding gift, something I had not seen for perfect ages and had almost forgotten ever existed, quite a fossil from prehistoric æons, or at least antediluvian days. Noah's grandmother may have brought one with her into the ark, packed in the elephant's trunk, or maybe she had two, as everything went into the ark by twos and twos.

"The animals went in two by two,  
The elephant and the kangaroo."

Come to think of it, the lady's name is not on the passenger list. There is Mr. and Mrs. Shem and the rest of the immediate family, but no mention is made of a grandmother. I fear she was sacrificed in the cataclysm, drowned while perched on the topmost bough of the tallest tree, cut off in the prime of life at the early age of say 300 or 400 years. If Noah was scanted for room, as no doubt he was, he might have left out the lion or the tiger couple to advantage and taken grandpa and grandma aboard for old acquaintance sake, though that arrangement would have been hard on Teddy.

I hung that specimen of antiquity on my cheval glass and invited the girls in to see the curiosity. I will bet ten hundred thousand to one that nobody guessed it. What should it be but a flannel petticoat, not by any manner of means belonging to the hobble variety. Four widths of yard-wide flannel, not gored one inch, all elaborately embroidered in white silk by auntie's own fair if somewhat shriveled fingers. Mommer put it away, after remarking oracularly, "You will find a use for it later on." I suppose she knows what she is talking about, but I don't. This I know, we girls will never consent to retrograde to those antiquated fashions now happily fallen into desuetude. Obsolescent like the subjunctive mood. As well be a Dutch peasant woman and pile on quilted petticoats four deep. I was always a good speller, but those words desuetude and obsolescent which have come down to us from Grover Cleveland might stagger a regius professor.

Were there ever such perfect deformities as the vast steel tilting hoops, thirty springs strong, to distend the crinoline, or the disfiguring camel's hump bustles

and bloated, wired, leg-of-mutton sleeves my mother says her mother used to sport? Now we have permanently settled on a costume which is æsthetic, graceful, the acme of good taste, with unsurpassed facilities for revealing "the human form divine." I am aware that it is unbecoming to stout women to be too fully revealed by a scarce costume, but why *be* stout while Susanna Cocroft stands by ready to teach you "how you can weigh exactly what you should weigh."

The doctors croak about half-clad girls finding early graves. Let them possess their souls in peace. Pride keeps us as warm as toast. We shall not die of union suits, nor long corsets, nor lack of warm underwear; neither will exposed throats and bare arms in zero weather prove fatal. Even the doctors' bugaboo of a high heel in the middle of a sole finds no place in the bills of mortality. These are *facts* for "Mr. Gradgrind."

Here am I postponing the worst of our catastrophes because I hate to think of Jack's pet horse, who died a martyr to the cause of true love. One frosty day when Jack was in such a hurry to see me (being, as he said, famished for a kiss) that he did not stop to have his horse sharp-shod, the poor creature slipped on the ice, fell and broke his leg, thus making it necessary to shoot him. Bridget declared, "It is all along of their wicked Protestant ways, gettin' married in Lent. Why can't they wait till after Easter? What's the good of being married on a person's birthday? But it's him that's the satisfied man wid all her whims."

No horse was ever more sincerely mourned than that gallant dapple gray. His master placed a marble slab over his grave with the inscription "Beautiful,

faithful, beloved.” Tom composed an ode to his memory. To be sure, his handwriting rivals Horace Greeley’s, but that is nothing to the purpose. The poem was to consist of thirteen lines because the horse was so unlucky. First Tom wrote down the end rhymes, or as Mademoiselle Angélique de Marcel (I wonder did she invent the marcel wave?) would prefer that they should be called, *les bouts rimés*. The projected poem progressed but slowly, the throes of composition soon coming to a full stop. I quoted “Poeta nascitur non fit” for my brother’s edification. He has not even a bowing acquaintance with Latin or Greek, so he retaliated by saying, “Don’t sling your old Greek Homer at me.” I have a very private belief that when a sophomore mistakes a common Latin proverb for one of the hexameters of the Iliad, his college expenses are money thrown away, which thing ought not to be, for Popper often tells us he works his son’s way through college. Tom finished his poem at last, and appreciated it so highly that he expressed a willingness to compose an epithalamium for our wedding breakfast, but we declined the honor and bound him over to keep the peace. A dithyramic glee by Thomas, sung by himself in B flat, would have eclipsed all our other woes.

To cap the climax, when I began to remove my white satin gown and unwind the yards and yards of valenciennes lace draped around me all in one piece to avoid cutting, I found that I had only twenty minutes for getting out of that entanglement, getting into my going-away suit, distributing the flowers in my bridal bouquet among the bridesmaids and living through the hailstorm of rice and old slippers. As if all that was not enough, I soon perceived that the

skirt of my traveling dress had vanished. There lay the purple waist, jacket, dinky little hat, veil, gloves and breast-knot of pansies, but not a vestige of the tailor-made skirt was anywhere to be seen. The house forthwith resolved itself into a committee of the whole. Everyone searched high and searched low. The bridesmaids rushed to the attic store closets; the bridegroom overhauled his suit case; the guests tossed their wraps about until they became involved in inextricable confusion. Rouncewell, Jack's man, dubbed by Tom "The groom of the stole," displayed his usual ineffective inefficiency by running up and down the stairs. The chambermaid peeped under the beds and behind the bureaus; the lady's maid opened drawers everywhere; the waitress peered under her assortment of aprons behind the kitchen door; the laundress plunged into the set tubs up to her armpits; the cook examined the butler's pantry, the butler was not in condition to examine anything; the chauffeur assumed his favorite position on the flat of his back under the car, to make sure that all was in order for the rapid transit which he foresaw would be needed to catch the 3.45 train; the police officer who was guarding the presents seemed to have a more lucid and logical mind than the rest of the world, for he it was who went straight to the boxes and baskets of left-over delicacies from the breakfast, stored beneath the kitchen piazza for removal

"Soon as the evening shades prevail  
And the moon takes up the wondrous tale."

Alas and alas! 'Twas all in vain. At the latest moment, Mommer said with her accustomed com-

manding air, forgetting I was now a married woman, "Olivia, put on your brown suit at once. It is the only thing to do. It looks very nice and you can get a new ready-to-wear suit in New York."

Thus was I forced *nolens volens* to don a suit I had worn anytime the last two months. The costume did not match Jack's socks nor his necktie, both of which had been most carefully selected with reference to a symphony in color, Jack going around to the various tailors' shops with a piece of my purple dress goods in his hand. Our apparel was an ignominious combination. Brown and purple! Why, as the French say, the colors swore at each other, and we were to have been arrayed in purple and fine linen a perfect ecstasy in that royal hue. We tried to find a ready-made purple suit in New York, but there was not a single one that was passably chic. It ended in Jack's purchasing an outfit of ties and socks in brown, which always does injustice to his complexion. Altogether the loss of that skirt about spoiled our wedding journey.

Great was the wonder excited by the disappearance of the bride's skirt. It was as incomprehensible as a jig-saw puzzle. The day after the wedding four reporters interviewed Popper about it. The sly old fox gave it for a scoop to the paper which had the best notice of the wedding in Society Events. When Jack heard of it he exclaimed, "Hang the reporters! What nuisances they make of themselves! I should think Mr. Carisbrook might have sent them to the right-about. We shall be a laughing-stock at every one of my clubs. Goodness only knows how long it will take to live down that story. I daresay it will be legendary in the time of our great-great-grandchildren."

I wanted Jack to say "Father Carisbrook," but he didn't. I suppose it was not a propitious moment in which to prefer my request, but he needn't mind about Popper and the reporters, for Miss Eleanor Murfreesboro was one of the guests and she will give more notoriety to the story than all the newspapers in the country put together could accomplish with star reporters, double columns and scare heads, for they are satisfied with one insertion, while she will have five hundred repetitions with ever new additions and improvements.

After awhile we settled it in our own minds that the skirt was abducted to spite us by a ninny who is dead in love with Jack or Jack's money.

Nearly a month had passed; we were at home again, "all three" including Fluffy, when one day sister Julia shouted: "Eureka! Olivia did it all her own self. She bundled up the skirt with the worn-out dresses she sent to the Rummage Sale. It is exactly like one of her absent-minded idiosyncrasies, which word in this case ought to have a *t* in it."

If I do not know my faults it is not because Julia fails to point them out. I protested that I was *not* an *idiot* and that it was all nonsense about the rummage sale. I yearned to slap her, but wild horses cannot stop Julia once she takes a notion into her head, and she persisted in telephoning to the salesroom. The clerk answered that such a skirt as she described was sent with Miss Carisbrook's donation. They noticed that it was new, so held it to be reclaimed, but as there was no inquiry for it, it had been sold the day previous. They would advertise and offer a reward, which they did, and the skirt was recovered lying at a dressmaker's, where it had been left to be shortened

at the bottom and widened at the top to fit the present owner. Of course I would be taller and slimmer than she, for whoever saw a lithe, willowy purchaser at a second-hand sale? I wish Julia hadn't meddled. I do not want the bothersome thing, for I could never wear it without reminding people of the absurd story. I tried to get Popper to make Julia wear it herself, but he says it is quite too much to expect him to be the head of The Great Bed Rock Foundation Corporation and manage Julia too. I detest that aggravating smile of hers. It would not do her any harm to be slanged a bit. Professor Harris did try it on in the chemistry class, when he asked, "What is lighter than hydrogen?" but when he told the answer she took it as a compliment to her fairy-like, thistle-down motions and thanked him prettily.

I cannot imagine how the skirt got to that sale, for it is highly improbable, not to say impossible, that I could have sent it without knowing it. Tom says, "Livy, own up like a brick, and I will tell you a fool thing Jack did the day before the wedding that beats you all hollow." I should like to know what it was, but if Jack wanted me to know he would tell me himself, and I'll not begin by allowing people to tell me tales about my husband; besides, I don't see how I can confess as long as I believe I did not do it. More likely it was a trick of that prestidigitateur who was flabbergasting the town that week. It would not be half so wonderful as some of his other dextrous manipulations; for instance, the hocus-pocus with Mrs. Jones' wedding-ring, the identity of which could be easily proved because it had this couplet engraved inside:

"Two mutual hearts  
Death never parts."

I wonder if Jack's heart and mine are mutual. It sounds frightfully funny.

After a few incantations the ring vanished in mid-air before the dazed eyes of the audience. The conjurer assured the distressed Mrs. Jones that her ring would be found in the hat of a man sitting in the third seat from the aisle in the front row of the balcony. This man's hat was on his head, he said it had not been off the whole evening—so said also the disgruntled people behind him, whose view of the stage was obstructed by his headgear. When he was finally persuaded to remove it, there on the top of his bald spot reposed a dear little white rabbit, sound asleep, with Mrs. Jones' ring, motto and all, dangling from his lop ear.

The Professor explained: he said he always liked to explain his little deceptions. The rabbit had "pink-eye;" on being told that gold earrings were a cure for sore eyes, he consented to have his ear pierced. Subsequently he was put to sleep by "Suggestion" and deprived of weight by "Levitation."

I think the transfer of my skirt from closet to bundle would have been a far easier legerdemain trick for the conjurer to perform.

So many contretemps were constantly happening that I begged my husband as we traveled by field and flood to take out two accident policies. I had a presentiment that our train would be telescoped, or else wrecked by suffragettes, and presentiments are serious things; at least, mine are.

Whenever Jack said he was sure we should reach home all right, I knocked on wood, according to the established custom of the folks at home, some of them pretty sensible folks too. Jack called it a silly

superstition, though he allowed it had a pretty origin among the nuns a long time ago, who used to touch the wooden crucifixes they wore around their necks, in an appeal to the gentle Christ for protection from any words of self-confidence they had uttered; but he considered knocking on the arm of a car seat or window frame would be of little or no avail.

I regret the insurance money we threw away on those policies, for no matter how much money Jack has, I am like Popper and always like the feeling that I am paying for value received. It might have supplied me with a dozen pairs of semi-transparent silk stockings. Transparent silk stockings are expensive and wear out soon; still, I must wear them and wear them *out*. There is another *out* which the dictionary defines as "under observation." This also applies to silk hosiery. Now that we ladies cross our knees man fashion, our stockings are *under observation* most of the time, very visible to the naked eye. I wonder the pernickety judge who was so much shocked by a woman's crossed knees in his courtroom did not fuss about the naked eye. He must be blood kin or at least a family connection of the Court Chamberlain who returned Queen Elizabeth's gift of a pair of silk stockings to her sister queen, with the indignant protest: "The Queen of Spain has no legs."

Mommer says her maiden aunt Jane used to inquire if both her feet were flat on the floor, remarking, "There is a certain delicacy to be observed." In those trammelled days girls were not permitted to cross even their ankles, though all unseen beneath their long and voluminous drapery.

If anyone had foretold that a grand-niece of this fastidious lady would ride astride of a horse, in a

pair of trousers and a divided skirt, I do not believe she could have survived "the deep damnation of my *taking off*." Duncan's taking off by Macbeth would have been a mere bagatelle in comparison, though the riding master declares "it is done with the grace and elegance of a coryphee," whatever that may be. I meant to look it up in my classical dictionary but forgot it.

I thank my stars I was not born in the Dark Ages before women were at least partially emancipated. Life could not have been worth living without cigarettes to smoke, cocktails to imbibe, Huyler's chocolates to devour, golf to play, motors to drive, bridge to kill time. Poor ancestresses! I suppose they thought they were enjoying themselves with a dozen children and one antique best gown, no *moiré* about that antique. A new baby every year, a new frock every third year. There is *a moving picture* without going to the theater to see it.

For all that I do not approve of being *too* emancipated, neither does my husband. We draw the line at freak dances. Mommer says she is glad we draw it somewhere.

Besides the dances *I* draw the line at swearing. Tom says, "Listen to Olivia's creed. In the first place, an oath is bad form. In the second place, it is wicked."

This is true enough, reversing the order in which it pleases Tom to place them.

Apropos of swearing, I recall with a shudder the damp sheets, towels and napkins we encountered at almost every hotel we stopped at on our journey. (In one place the sheets were almost wringing wet and I fully expected to die of pneumonia.) Jack

contracted the habit of not articulating all the final letters when he said, "Here is another damp towel." I always reproved him and made him repeat the phrase properly, though he said it was a pity I had such a prejudice against a fine old Saxon monosyllable.

There was one occasion on which I allowed him to swear a blue streak without reprimand or making any effort towards his reclamation. I even went so far as to say, "I think so too," but, of course, *that* was not swearing. It was at Old Point Comfort where we had no comfort old or new, and failed to see the point when Rouncewell brought the wrong suitcase from the car to the hotel. As our trunks were non-comeatable, being checked to the next stopping place, I did not know how Jack would manage when we discovered that the owner of the wrong suitcase was a lady, but he said he was always grateful for small mercies, and slept balmily that night in a low-necked, short-sleeved, much befrilled, belaced and beribboned creation, and hoped the other party found his pajamas a very present help in time of trouble. Jack's suitcase was returned to the address on the label, but we had no clue to the lady's beauteous belongings, so they went the way of the purple skirt. There was a ring at the telephone and the inquiry if this time we really meant it, and we said we did.

As another instance of the resemblance between the abnormal perturbations of our honeymoon and the parallactic librations of the real bona fide moon I will mention that on the arrival of the lost suitcase at the paternal mansion the entire family fell into hysterics, imagining there had been a terrible railroad wreck—nothing saved but the baggage.

I look after the parrot's morals as well as Jack's. Every time that precious bird raps out an oath I douse her in a basin of cold water, though I cannot see that this heroic treatment has the slightest reformatory effect. Tom has a choice bit bearing on the subject. I tell him it sounds to me like an old newspaper story; however, he vouches for its authenticity. One day some small chickens were set down before the kitchen fire to dry after being drenched in a shower. Pretty Polly was hanging head downward in her swing shrieking with laughter, but rose to the top of her perch, scratched her ear with her claw and after critically examining the chickens, put her head on one side, cocked her eye in that droll way she has and remarked thoughtfully, "Little damned things! Been swearing, I suppose."

Speaking of towels, I found a towel in one of my trunks after we came home, marked "Waldorf-Astoria." That was a mystery too great for me to solve alone, so after having put an unusual strain on the gray matter of my brain I asked Jack how he supposed it got there. He replied, "The same way your dress skirt got to the sale. Better mark it 'A case of conscience,' put it in the parcel-post and send it back before they advertise a reward, probably adding that the person who took it is well known and will save herself trouble by returning it." Yet I had believed that my husband had full faith in my theory about the conjurer. How little do we know of the secret thoughts of our nearest and dearest!

That same day I made another painful discovery. I found that our announcement cards were sent out with honour spelled without the *u*, like this: "Mr. and Mrs. George Carisbrook have the honor to announce,"

etc. We shall surely be classed among *les nouveaux riches* if we do things in such bourgeois style. I should hardly have expected the cards would have been engraved in that way, even if Popper did use the reformed spelling in his order, for they pride themselves in those establishments on keeping abreast with the times.

I have had my new cards engraved in two styles, "Mrs. John St. Albans" for ordinary use, and "Mrs. Olivia Carisbrook-St. Albans" for use among my Women's Rights constituency. My spouse respectfully admired the hyphenated surname, advised that I should have "Votes for Wimmin" added in the lower left-hand corner of the card, and a black edge (not too inconsolably deep) to denote still more plainly than by the absence of his name that they are the cards of the Widow St. Albans. *I a relict*. Picture it! He is a great tease and has a way of talking about any new ideas of mine which causes them to collapse like a pin-punctured toy balloon, leaving me all flattened out. I do not believe I shall use those cards after all, as my husband objects to them. Besides, I have just been invited by Mrs. Berney MacBerney to join the Anti-Suffrage League. I see by their circular they have some of the best society names in town among their officers and members. Mommer advises caution, "No decided step yet."

In regard to my new name, I should like to pronounce it "Stalbans" as they do in England, but Jack's father has set his face against it like flint. He called me to him and said, "Look here, my pretty poppet. Don't you think it is enough for my son to change *your* name without your trying to change *mine*? Hands off my honorable name, or I shall call

you an Anglomaniac, and that is good and sufficient ground for divorce, proving that you are Exhibit A in the front rank of the fourth class of divorcees. Kiss me and don't turn out a pestiferous plague on my hands." It is easy to see where this son of his father gets his tongue of guile that carries all before him.

"Let us return to our muttons," or I suppose it would be more correct, at least less rude and crude, to restore this slang to its original classic French and say, "*Revenons à nos moutons.*" It seems to be needful for me to supervise other things besides announcement cards. I must look over the description of our trip to Washington Jack is writing for the *Times*, to see that he does not put in any swear words or any jokes to hurt the feelings of the Christian Scientists or the Pope of Rome. I imagine his account will be all *couleur de rose*. I could give my impression of the inauguration in short order. It would be just this: We stopped over the week-end and until Tuesday night to witness President Wilson's inauguration. It was a most depressing function—no reception, no ball. I was bored to tears. The President of the United States is bound to be *ex-officio* a society leader, like President Arthur or dear King Edward of England. It ought to be put in the oath of office. This gentleman behaves as though he never heard of Society with a capital S. Miss Katrina Van Benthusen, who is a descendant of one of the old patroons of Albany whose "father killed a bear," told me she feared the country will lose prestige this four years. Teddy could see him and go one better.

This is all I would say for publication. In a whisper to myself I would add I should not object to the title of "First Lady in the Land," but I shall never get it,

for Jack raves about "the corruption of American politics and the futility of reform." He declines to be mixed up in them in any way. I believe he does vote for President if the quadrennial first Tuesday in November chances to fall on a pleasant day, so that his silk hat may not be spoiled by the rain; at least, he did vote last time, which was the only election since he came of age. He asked me if I was a suffragist and I replied, "The only vote I covet is yours." He remarked, "That sounds very pretty, but it is susceptible of two interpretations." Not so. I have no ambitions left, political or otherwise. I have ceased crying for the moon. I used to dream of living in "dear ol' Lonnon," of dukes and duchesses, strawberry leaves and the right of being kissed by the queen from the steps of the throne whenever I appeared at court, but that is all swallowed up in Jack. Only my husband and a decent position in society is all I crave now.

We always bought a souvenir at every place we visited. In Washington at a dog fancier's we fell in love with a bewitching little skye terrier, bought him, named him "Fluffy" on the spot and gave the leash to Rouncewell, telling him to lead the dog to the hotel. We took a car and arrived first. While I stood at the parlor window watching for them I saw Rouncewell approach swinging a chain with an empty collar at the end of it. What had become of my darling little pet? I could stand no longer. I felt I must sit down. Someone has written, "Suppose we were horses and could never sit down; but they have four legs to stand on, that may make it easier." If I had as many as a centipede or grandmother's thousand-legged table I should have collapsed all

the same. We believed that Rouncewell had let the dog escape purposely to avoid taking care of him. I wanted to change his name to Trouncewell, and put the new name in force instanter, but Jack has a superstition that he is the only onliest man on this orb of land and sea, astronomically named the planet Earth, who can shave without rasping and cutting, so to avoid a collision with the wretch, who ought to be clapped in irons and kept on bread and water, I was hurried off to the dog-store to buy another terrier. The first thing we saw there was Fluffy with his eyes burning out like black stars from the cloud of long silky hair falling over them—for that rascally servant had taken him back and told the proprietor that the missus had changed her mind and wanted her money again, so he pocketed the twenty dollars and left the dog. Jack's brow grew as black and his jaw set as square as his father's. He left me with the dog, saying he would go and fetch the leash. Very soon he returned bringing also the money he had compelled the rascal to disgorge. On our walk to the hotel he said very quietly, but the quietness was a weather-breeder, "I have discharged my duty by discharging the thief. We will not be bothered with a valet any longer. I think I am equal to purchasing the car tickets, checking the 'bloomin' luggage,' tugging at the trunk straps, brushing my coat and dropping letters in the street boxes. Keeping the dog 'surgically clean' will give scope to my genius. I can surely care for a puppy if I can do the bigger stunt of buttoning your gowns up the back. It was an undertaking at first, wasn't it? You may bet I repented not having urged you to bring your maid, but since I have mastered that neglected branch of my education I feel a before

undreamed of confidence in my ability to do and dare all things. Amassing a colossal fortune like the governor's sinks into insignificance. I might sometime or other shave myself if I had a Gillette safety razor. There is where I am going to miss Rouncewell. I shall never find another such a barber. He would not steal more than ten dollars a week and I would gladly pay as much as that for his smooth shave every day, but the principle of the thing had to be considered. I knew he smoked my cigars and helped himself liberally to toilet articles with occasional handkerchiefs, collars and cuffs, but this trans-action is the end of the limit. I could not overlook such a bare-faced swindle. Of course, he never calculated on our going back to the store, finding the dog and hearing the true story; he was confident his tale of the dog slipping his collar would pass muster."

The hotel clerk condescended from his high station and conscious superiority so far as to take a mitigated lukewarm interest in the affair and added a descriptive phase to the register. After "Mr. and Mrs. John St. Albans and valet," he wrote, "a helva feller."

After a day or two Rouncewell had the impudence to apply for a character. Jack sent him this recommendation:

"DEAR SIR: Rouncewell is the best barber you or any other man were ever shaved by.

"JOHN ST. ALBANS."

I should like to have seen his face when he read this back-action compliment and have known if he will ever use it.

I will say one thing for Rouncewell, he was careful about the foreign labels on my trunks. There they all are, not one scraped off:

Shepherd's Hotel, Cairo.	Luxor Hotel, Luxor.
Grand Hotel Michel, Rome.	Hotel Russell, London,
Parker's Hotel, Naples.	Hotel Luna, Venice.
Hotel Savoy, Paris.	Warwick Arms, Warwick.
etc., etc., etc.	

Fluffy proved to be an entirely exemplary dog and gave us very little trouble. He was, and is, a never-ending source of pleasure. He learns a new trick nearly every day and the way he loves us is a caution to dog-haters, also the way we love him. How much more lovable some dogs are than some humans, and how much they know which is a sealed book to us, as unknown as the life of William Shakespeare or the whereabouts of the Sangreal. I must write a brochure some day about Fluffy; he is as worthy of being immortalized as the beloved dogs of all time. He will compare favorably with the tailless dog of Alcibiades, with Sir Walter Scott's Maida, with Rab and his Friends, with the Dog of Montargis, with the brave and loyal martyred Gelert, with the Mount St. Bernard dog who saved forty lives, and with hundreds more I could mention.

I hear Jack's voice downstairs describing "Livy's Mouse Campaign."

"I depose and say that one night Olivia woke me to convince me that this time there really was a mouse in the room, as anyone not stone deaf could hear by the rustling of the paper where it was nibbling the crumbs in our picnic box on the table. I actually heard something that sounded rather mouse-like. Taking my life in my hand, I braved the dangers of investigation while Livy covering up her head in the bedclothes, braved the dangers of suffocation. It turned out to be, not the supposedly carnivorous

quadruped held in awe by one-half of our population, but the comparatively harmless object the loose leaves of the Saturday Night Boston *Evening Transcript* fanned gently about the floor by the changing current of air from the open windows, albeit that most reputable paper is not to be whiffled about by every change of wind.

"Oh, the mice we did *not* meet in those hotels are past counting; to enumerate them by units, tens, hundreds, thousands would be a heavy strain. I asked Olivia if she was going to keep up the excitement all through our wedded bliss, she said, 'Not so, my lord; I always have at least two mouse-traps baited with toasted cheese in every room in the house, not counting cats.' I sniffed up my aduncate nose as much as it is capable of being sniffed up, saying scornfully, 'Oh, cheese it! Did you ever catch anything?' 'No, but in time of peace prepare for war. It is the only safeguard.'

"She did not pause to laugh at my joke about cheese as she has heretofore punctiliously made a point of doing at every one of my facetious efforts in accordance with the instructions laid down in her trusted manual entitled, 'How to make Home Happy,' wherein there is a whole chapter devoted to the importance of always giving a husband his favorite dinners, allowing him to smoke in every room in the house and laughing at his jokes, however feeble or frequently repeated. I see she has a leaf turned down for a mark at the advice about being 'a good biddable wife,' and has written on the margin, 'I intend to obey Jack in all things.' Heaven save the mark! Not pausing to laugh she entered at once on her defence with the enthusiasm of a lawyer with the defendant's rebutter.

“Suppose I *am* a coward. Suppose I *am* afraid of a mouse. Has not centuries of running away evolved the speed of the horse and made him the most beautiful and useful of animals? If he had not been timid and ready to take to his heels at the slightest sign of danger real or imaginary he never could have lived through the survival of the fittest, for he has no weapons for attack or defence except his heels and they are badly placed where they would avail nothing against the lowered horns of a bull in his chest or the sharp claws of a tiger on his back.’

“You should hear Livy when she waxes eloquent and discourses on the mouse question.”

So far Jack. I listened, for I was curious to hear what he would say about me when he did not know I heard him. Dear boy, not a word about his own sufferings in the mouse war. I wondered at his knowing any law terms, such as rebutter, but I remember now he told me after he graduated at college his father insisted on his reading law, so that if he lost or spent all his money he would have a profession to fall back upon. I recollect his saying, “I guess I shan’t die of what I know about law.” He stuck to his uncle’s office about six months, but I believe was not called to the bar, as they say in England; at least, I never heard of Chief Justice Holmes of the United States Supreme Court calling him, and he would be likely to do it *if anyone*, as he is well acquainted with Father St. Albans. Dear me! What a mouthful that name is, to be sure. I can never call him Popper, for if I did he would call me “blessed imp” or some other abusive pet name. I told Jack I could not understand his father. He laughed and said, “Neither can I, nor anybody else, but he is a

courageous old party and though he never reads anything but the tape, he gets what he goes after. He can hold his own, and then some. He always has a corner in secrets as if the tape was his bosom friend and told him when stocks and shares are going to pass their dividends, just how the market stands, what is doing on the street at any given moment and when 108 is bid and 109 asked for preferred. He can always fleece the lambs and squeeze the shorts. He says that is 'legitimate,' but it does not appeal to me, and I am going to keep out of it. Tom is a born stock-broker and has taken a few flyers already."

I am glad Jack has made that pious resolution, but I don't like to have him call me a rebutter. I haven't butted in anywhere, although I do think the St. Albans family rather look down on us because we don't trace grandfathers and grandmothers back two hundred and fifty years to a king and an orange girl. That is too high and too low for us; we keep the *juste milieu*; besides, I have been told the patronymic does not prove descent from Nell Gwyn, promoted for her pretty face to be Duchess of St. Albans, merely that Jack's family originated at the place of that name, where later Mr. Jarndyce lived in his Bleak House and found the East Wind very objectionable.

Well, I must not be cross about my husband's people. They have been very nice to me, and my poor boy has had some grievances of his own this "treacle-moon" trip. Notably when he had an invitation to take a seat in an aeroplane and his alarming wife after severe mental conflict could not and would not consent to his accepting it, though he explained it would only be a *flying visit* to the clouds. Did not Mother Goose have this very event in mind almost

two hundred years ago when she wrote, "Jack fell down and broke his crown?" but she was way off when she added, "And Jill came tumbling after," for nothing will ever induce this Jill to become an aviatress or aviatrix or whatever may be the feminine of aviator. Why not say air-man and air-woman, or perchance airy woman would sound more natural? I have been called by that name myself ere now. Jack declares the reason I would not let him go was because I did not want him to look down on me. Was I not warned to keep my distance from airships by that ter-rific nightmare a short time ago? I dreamed my dear boy went up in his airship. They carried a full cargo of mice loaded to the gunwale. When they were about fifty miles high they decided to throw over some of the ballast. With that end in view they opened the mouse cage and before I could have said Jack Robinson all those vile, venomous vermin descended in swarms. I ran hither and thither to avoid them, but it was of no use. Just as I was going to be crushed to death by billions and trillions of the noxious creatures settling on my head, I woke with a most awful scream. It was a mercy I waked before I died, but we always do in these frightful dreams. I never heard of anything bad *really happening* in a nightmare; we rouse before the crisis reaches us.

Jack suggested that I had been reading over the Pied Piper in the evening, but I had not, only thinking about a pet squirrel I had when I was a little girl. I loved it dearly, but when my reprehensible brother cut off its plummy tail it looked so much like a rat that I was deceived and ran away screaming, and when poor shorn Bunny jumped on my shoulder I fainted dead away.

It was one of Jack's favorite schemes to take me with him on a visit to his Alma Mater and there live over again in imagination those happy days of fun and frolic. On our way to the college I shared his eager anticipations listening to the "Twice Told Tales" of his exploits, particularly ringing the bell for chapel at two o'clock in the morning while returning from a riotous wine supper, thereby filling the chapel with a concourse of half-asleep, half-dressed men. His companions were caught red-handed, but he had the presence of mind to file in to prayers yawning with the newly awakened ones, his tousled hair, unbuttoned vest, hanging coat sleeves and casual air of nonchalance defying suspicion.

When we arrived on the campus he was in high glee, talking of the envy which would fill the souls of the collegians when his wife should burst on their startled vision. Natheless he was doomed to fresh disappointment. The few men whom he recognized he had left freshmen and found seniors. They regarded him as a patriarch in the land, treating him very deferentially, which was not his desire, especially as they withstood the shock of my beauty without the quiver of an eyelash, each one doubtless being rendered beauty-proof by a divinity of his own.

Then poor Jack turned to the professors. They were still there not much older nor grayer nor worse for the wear and tear of several thousand freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors who had passed through their hands since Jack's time.

Only two remembered him at all. One clapped him on the back and inquired if he was as certain as he used to be that  $7 \text{ times } 9 \text{ are } 54$ ? The other said, "Yes, I recollect. You were concerned in changing

the chapel Bibles between colleges and would have been expelled only your father is a multi-millionaire and on the Board."

A newly appointed professor seeing how chap-fallen Jack looked over his not too cordial reception, took pity on him and invited us to his house to partake of five o'clock tea. We spent a pleasant hour there, but the only real bit of comfort Jack got out of his visit was from the tribute of the janitor, which struck me as able. He said, "I always jolly well knew that such a prime judge of horse-flesh would be a good judge of calico when the right time came." So he hit his bird on both wings. Jack spun a gold eagle in the air and the man who wasn't born yesterday captured it with no diminution of his old-time skill in coin catching.

When I get too intolerably vain in consequence of so much flattery I contemplate my visage in the bowl of my soup spoon at dinner. It is an excellent antidote, very; first concave, then convex.

My crestfallen partner's latest disappointment came when his Niagara kodak views failed to develop in the perfection which should have characterized them considering he made use of the cataract chiefly as an appropriate background to enhance my portrait, never for a moment imagining that Niagara would be so inconsiderate as to dwarf me to about the size of a New Jersey mosquito. This disillusion coming on the top of the episode at the breakfast table that morning, nearly superinduced Americanitis or so-called nervous prostration, but the landlord brought him through by prescribing a Gin Elevated Spheroid.

I laugh every time I think of that breakfast with the fledgling, which resembled the Bon Ami Soap

chicken, inasmuch as "it had never scratched yet." Jack had taken up his knife and exhibited an accomplishment of which he is inordinately vain, striking off the small end of his egg at one light blow without removing it from the cup. The head waiter was standing behind his chair an interested spectator of the feat. I was looking in surprise at the great man who had never before deigned to leave his post at the door of the hall, when suddenly a look of horror overspread his Milesian features. Lightning is slow compared to the swoop which swept that egg-cup from the table, but haste and speed proved fatal. The horror-stricken man slipped on the polished floor, strove to retrieve himself, lost his balance and in his struggles launched the immature bird, imprisoned in its maternal envelope, the length of the dining-room until it fell and the shell broke on the prima donna's plate, eliciting a scream which rose in a crescendo higher than she had ever achieved on the operatic stage, and she nearly fainted in good earnest, no *feint* this time. I had thought there could be nothing worse than a live mouse, but perhaps a dead, half-fledged, parboiled chicken may surpass it if suddenly deposited on one's plate from out the circumambient air. But my sympathy is for the setting (or perhaps I ought to say the sitting) hen, who was fraudulently prevented from doing her whole duty as a parent.

The prima donna was inclined to blame "the innocent holder," but he politely assured her that it would be a life-long pang to him that owing to the limitation of vision he had been unable to see through the opaque shell and thus avoid the regrettable disturbance of her nervous system. Whereupon the actress laughed and walked away.

Jacky says we need not caution him not to count his chickens before they are hatched; he doesn't want to.

At another hotel an ancient dame, who had watched Jack's prowess admiringly for several days, was tempted of the Evil One to imitate his dexterity, so taking up her soft-boiled egg she struck it broad-side on, a smart blow with the flat of her knife. The result was a plentiful bespattering of tablecloth, hands, face and clothes. Jack left his untasted breakfast muttering, "Great Cæsar! I suppose I am to blame for this too!"

Why do such dire consequences follow constantly in our wake? I remained and helped to repair damages with the aid of half a dozen able-bodied waiters, water and towels *ad libitum*. I should never have believed so much material could have been compressed in so small a compass. It made the old adage clear to me: "As full as an egg is of meat." Only suppose it had been an ostrich egg! I did not enjoy staying and helping to clear up the eggy mess, but if I had shirked and deserted the poor thing in her hapless plight I should have had a poor opinion of myself ever afterwards.

My better half gave no more matinal exhibitions, but fed on omelets until he was safe in the arms of his own family who are not stuck on copying his every motion. He said to me, "That is one thing I like about you; you don't go around imitating people." "No," was my meek reply; "like you I am busy setting the pace for others to imitate." Truly it was no light thing to be a leader of ton in those rural districts where we visited some agricultural cousins; however, I consider I fulfilled my mission with con-

siderable éclat. When the girls, clustering around me as closely as a swarm of bees around their queen, asked with breathless interest in antiphonal chorus, "Oh, Mrs. St. Albans, how do they make sleeves now?" I kept my equipoise and just told them, "Girls, you can wear your own God-given sleeves; moreover, the browner they are tanned the tonier you are, thereby proving that you have been out of town all summer." "Yes," they groaned, "and all winter too."

I find I am not the only woman who renders herself and those around her uncomfortable by her imaginary fears and terrors. We became acquainted during our matrimonial jaunt with an elderly lady, somewhat inclined to understate her family Bible age, a sort of "abandoned derelict" who appealed to us for sympathy and protection. It has been rather frequently mentioned that Sidney Smith once said it was so insufferably hot he wished he could take off his flesh and sit in his bones. In like manner our self-elected, unattached, traveling companion was so abnormally sensitive she seemed to take off her flesh and sit in her nerves. She had always lived in the country and had no notion of electricity except in the form of lightning, of which she had an overpowering dread. The broomstick train was a new experience to her, as awesome as my mice to me. On taking her seat for the first time she whispered she felt as if about to be electrocuted, and looked around for corpses. She was alarmed by the telegraph wires overhead, believing they would surely attract lightning even out of a cloudless sky. The electric street lights were things to shun. When they grew dim and then flared up she would clutch my arm and cry, "Now! now they are going to explode!" She had a holy

horror of telephones, for, as she put it, "Besides the danger, it was so dreadful to take everybody's breaths, they must be a great means of disseminating disease." As for riding full tilt in an electric motor, it was anathema. When she first heard the clang of the motor horn and a limousine charged on her at a street crossing it straightway became a Juggernaut car, for she prostrated herself before it and it was only due to Jack's muscular arm that she did not become a victim to "the Satanic brass god Moloch in the pleasant valley of Hinnom or Tophet, meaning the place of drums, so-called in allusion to the drums and timbrels sounded to drown the cries of children sacrificed to the idol."

Jack was so good natured we actually went a hundred miles out of our way to see this waif and stray from a former age to her journey's end. When we left her she was happy in being a mile from a telegraph pole, in a house without telephones, electric lights or bells, not even a wireless ship in the offing. We pitied her, but after we had deposited her in safety Jack threw back his head in the carriage and laughed loud and long; then he repeated a verse which seemed applicable:

"Ancient maiden lady  
Anxiously remarks  
That there must be peril  
'Mong so many *sparks*.  
Roguish looking fellow,  
Turning to the stranger,  
Says it's his opinion  
*She is out of danger.*"

"Oh, wasn't it just ripping? The rippingest farce ever; a record breaker; nothing to beat it from

Portland, Maine, to Portland, Oregon. The mouse circus isn't a patch on it."

While we were experiencing our experiences I had taken stock of myself. When Jack was calm this brief dialogue ensued:

*Olivia:* Jack, I am going to try to cure myself of my mousephobia.

*Jack:* Good little girl! Do if you can. Don't if you can't.

*Olivia:* Don't you think Fluffy will be as good as a mouse trap?

*Jack:* Yes, much better; no odor of Limburger.

*Olivia:* Do you suppose I could ever be good?

*Jack:* You are an angel now.

*Olivia:* There are no women angels in Paradise Lost.

*Jack:* There is one angel woman in Paradise Found.

Nothing will make my husband see me as I am. I cannot take all this praise under false pretences. Behold me continually apologizing to myself for myself, miserable impostor that I am. I hope by the time that he gets his nine-days-eyes open I shall have improved so much he will never discover his mistake.

I fear our ill-luck is spreading to our families. Mommer has had her hair bleached today, but her face is blanched instead of her hair, for instead of the aristocratic snowy whiteness she had prefigured to herself her abundant tresses are transformed to a brilliant green. It is truly frightful. Her aspect as she said, "Children, don't speak to me," almost turned me to stone, as if she were indeed the veritable Gorgon she so closely resembles, her stray wisps of hair seeming to squirm for all the world like Medusa's snakes.

She has locked herself in her room and telephoned for the family physician. I don't know what he can do. I should have consulted the college chemist myself. When Popper knocked at her door she said, "George, go away; if you should see me you would laugh, then I *should* die." Poor Mommer! She has lost her grip on her boasted common sense, but I suppose we would all feel the same in her predicament. I wish she would let me go to her and comfort her. I hope the doctor will come soon; he will cheer her up. We shall surely find a way out of this scrape as we have in so many cases hitherto. When things are at the worst they must take a turn for the better. I will hold this thought firm, as the Christian Scientists say, and I shall write to the chemist right now on my own responsibility. I am going to take Fluffy to Mommer's door; he will scratch on it and she will let him in. The dear little loving pet will have a soothing influence. It will take more than Medusa to scare him.

Besides Mommer's calamity the contagion of our misfortunes appears to have reached my husband's family. I wonder would it do any good as a preventive or sort of mascot if I carried a rabbit foot. If I did, I should not dare to let my Mentor know it; he would say it was sillier than knocking on wood.

The first I heard was from Tom, who, primed with the news and aching to create a sensation, popped his cherubic countenance in at the door and cried with his simultaneous suddenness all over him, "Miss St. Albans has had her nose put out of joint." Now, whether that is cold fact or Tom's metaphorical way of talking, it savors of our disasters.

Tom and Jack do not know about Mommer's

hair, and it is not best they should. Tom would shriek, "Hello, Ma! Do you think it is the seventeenth of March and be you wearin' o' the green to jolly St. Patrick?" and Jack would inquire if she has lost her head like poor Vesuvius and laugh his loudest, though I am trying to keep the house in solemn, consolatory, sympathetic silence.

But the end is not yet. It cannot be said my brother is lazy and I am certain of his return before the incident is closed. Behold, there he is again at the window. I have implored him to try to tell the truth. He declares there is an understudy of the Biblical Jacob in the city who has been engineering a Leah and Rachel coup, engaging himself to Rachel in an unauthorized fashion. Tom asserts that their father ought to imitate Laban and proceed to knock out Jacob's under-pinning by saying, "No you don't; the youngest daughter cannot be married before the eldest. I won't have it." It surprises me, this Tom, for I did not know that so much residuum of his Sunday-school lessons remained in his brain. "Pooh!" says Tom, "I remember the whole story. Made her beau work for him seven years, rewarded him with the wrong sister at the end of the job, then Jacob took on another seven years' contract for the right one. Count me out. I'm no Jacob." It is not to be denied that Thomas has the sense of values.

Of course, this Scriptural comparison is nonsense, though I must confess that I myself should not have liked the obloquy of having a younger sister married before me. It was lucky Tom intervened between us and kept us four years apart or she might have come in ahead at the winning-post, for she is a precocious chit (though she didn't die early, or hasn't yet),

with a marked tendency towards matrimony. Of one thing I am sure, she will not need to attend the University course of lectures "For the Advancement of Husbandry." She is ready for college a year younger than I was, and has passed her preliminaries without conditions, which is more than I did. To give her her due, she is a bright girl and we love each other, though we do not always manifest it and sometimes I wish her in Ballyhack.

Hark! There is Jack calling, "Olivia, come and see what has happened now!"

That calloused trifler Tom is shouting in his best megaphone voice his favorite bit of Yiddish slang, "Ish ga bibble! Ish ga bibble!"

Oh, dear! Oh, dear! Are we living in the land of Uz in the days of Job? That patriarch was much tried, but then he was easily tried. If that clumsy express man has smashed my Chinese china dinner set to smithereens I shall give up in despair. Oh, worse! a hundred times worse. Tragedy enfolds me, wraps me round. My heart has skipped a beat. What *shall*, what *can* we do——?







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